



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
July 27, 2004

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MEDIA ADVISORY

**North Dakota Department of Health Reports First Human Case of West Nile Virus in 2004
(News Release Follows Below)**

Please note: The first human case of West Nile virus was identified in North Dakota today. Details are included in the news release below and will be discussed at the 1 p.m. whooping cough media conference call (see dial-in instructions that follow).

BISMARCK, N.D. – To answer media questions about whooping cough (pertussis) activity and the state's first human case of West Nile virus, the North Dakota Department of Health will hold a telephone media availability Tuesday, July 27, 2004, at 1 p.m. The following department officials will participate in the 1 p.m. conference call:

- Larry Shireley, state epidemiologist
- Heather Weaver, Immunization Program manager
- Tracy Miller, West Nile Virus Surveillance Program manager,

To connect to the conference call, the media is asked to follow these steps:

- 1) Dial 866.262.1846.
- 2) Once you are connected, enter *3282378*. (Please note: The star key must be pressed before and after the pin number.)
- 3) If you have trouble connecting, call the help desk at 800.263.3863 option 2.

Members of the media who wish to attend in person can meet at 1 p.m. in the Sakakawea Room on the main floor of the State Capitol Building, Bismarck N.D.

For more information about the conference call, contact Stacy Eberl, public information coordinator, at 701.328.4619.

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Visit the health department home page at www.ndhealth.gov.

North Dakota Reports First Human Case of West Nile Virus for 2004

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health today announced the state's first human case of West Nile virus infection for 2004, according to State Epidemiologist Larry Shireley.

Samples from a male between the ages of 20 and 29 who resides in Mercer County tested positive for the virus. The patient was not hospitalized.

“This case is a reminder to all North Dakotans of the importance of taking precautions to protect themselves from mosquitoes,” Shireley said.

To reduce the risk of being bitten by mosquitoes that carry West Nile virus, the state health department recommends the following protective measures:

- Limit outdoor activities between dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most likely to bite.
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts when possible.
- Eliminate stagnant water and leaf debris in containers around homes where mosquitoes can lay their eggs (e.g., buckets, flowerpots, old tires, wading pools and birdbaths).
- Keep mosquitoes from entering your home by repairing screens in windows and doors.
- Keep the grass around your home trimmed.
- Use insect repellent that contains DEET and is approved by the Environmental Protection Agency. (Read all instructions carefully.)

The following is a summary of West Nile virus activity to date:

- Human cases – 1
 - Total tests conducted – 382
- WNV-positive dead birds – 9
 - Total dead birds tested – 313
- WNV-positive live birds – 17
 - Total live birds tested – 260
- Counties with birds identified with WNV infection – 9
 - Billings, Bowman, Burleigh, Cass, Divide, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Williams
- WNV-positive horses – 0
 - Total horses tested – 31

For more information about West Nile virus, visit the health department website at www.ndwnv.com or contact Tracy Miller, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

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Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at www.nddohpressroom.gov.